

Amendments to the Claims:

1-47. (Cancelled)

48. (Currently amended) ~~An airbag~~ A steering assembly for a vehicle having an airbag mounted with a steering wheel, comprising:

~~with a mechanism for a "stationary" driver's airbag, i.e., a driver's airbag that does not rotate with the steering wheel, wherein the mechanism is situated within the steering column;~~
Characterized by the fact that it contains a steering shaft that is divided into two sections including an upper section and a lower section, the airbag and steering wheel connected to said upper section, whereby the airbag does not rotate when the steering wheel is rotated, and the steering wheel connected to the lower section, whereby the lower section rotates when the steering wheel is rotated according to a rotational ratio;

a transmission connecting said steering wheel and lower sections, the transmission including at least one connecting gear, the transmission operative to change said rotational ratio based upon a speed of the vehicle, or a rotational angle of the steering wheel[[:]].

49. (Currently amended) ~~The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 48, Characterized by the fact that wherein the upper section and the lower steering shaft section are alternatively arranged adjacent to one another, particularly in accordance with Figures 1a, b, c or 16a, b, c.~~

50. (Currently amended) ~~The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 49, Characterized by the fact that wherein the steering column shafts upper section and the lower section are realized in such a way that arranged so that they are supported in a common housing.~~

51. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 49, ~~Characterized by the fact that~~ wherein the airbag is supported on a "tube" first end of a tube, the tube that is open on [[the]] a bottom end, ~~particularly in accordance with Figures 1a, b, c or 16a, b, c.~~

52. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 49, ~~Characterized by the fact that~~ wherein the upper section and the lower section ~~of the steering wheel shaft~~ are connected by means of a gear mechanism.

53 (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 52, ~~Characterized by the fact that the connection between the two steering column halves is realized with the aid of~~ wherein said upper section and said lower section are connected by gearwheels, ~~particularly in accordance with Figures 1a, b, c.~~

54. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 52, ~~Characterized by the fact that the connection between the two steering column halves is realized with the aid of~~ wherein said upper section and said lower section are connected by a chain, ~~particularly in accordance with Figures 16a, b, c or 17a, b, c.~~

55. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 54, ~~Characterized by the fact that the housing halves are realized in such a way that~~ wherein said upper section and said lower section are arranged so that they are suitable for accommodating accommodate a chain tightener therebetween, operative to adjust a tension of said chain.

56. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 55, ~~Characterized by the fact that the housing halves are realized in such a way that~~ wherein said upper section and said lower section are arranged so that their relative position can be varied by means of left-hand/right-hand threads associated with said chain tightener, whereby said, ~~namely such that the~~

connecting chain has "no play," particularly in accordance with ~~Figures 16a, b, c or 17a, b, c~~ a desired tension.

57. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim 52, ~~Characterized by the fact that wherein the steering said gear mechanism of the steering column mechanism is realized in such a way that the enables a matching rotational direction between opposite movement of the steering wheel and the steering wheel and said lower section column is once again compensated, particularly in accordance with Figures 5a, b, c.~~

58. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim 52, further including a housing operative to contain a portion each of said upper section and said lower section, and ~~Characterized by the fact that wherein the connecting said gear mechanism is realized in such a way that it is homogenously accommodated in the "interior" disposed within said housing of the steering shaft or therebetween without requiring additional space.~~

59. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim 52, ~~Characterized by the fact that wherein the gear mechanism is realized in such a way that includes a sun gear associated with each of an end the upper section and an end of the lower section steering shaft respectively feature a "sun gear" on the outer end.~~

60. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim 59, further including a housing connected to the vehicle, ~~Characterized by the fact that gear mechanism further including is realized in such a way that the sun gears are connected by means of planet gears connected to [[on]] an axle supported in the stationary gear by said housing, said planet gears rotatably connecting said sun gears.~~

61. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim ~~[[52]]~~ 60, wherein the airbag includes a tube connected thereto, the tube housing one or more cables, ~~Characterized by~~

~~the fact that wherein the gear mechanism further includes a space within an interior of at least one of said sun gears, adjacent to at least one of said planet gears, through which said tube may pass is realized in the sun gears and planet gears in such a way that the tube carrying the airbag can be led through therebetween with its cable leadthrough, particularly in accordance with Figures 8a, b, c.~~

62. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 52, ~~Characterized by the fact that wherein the connecting gear mechanism is realized in such a way that includes a bevel gear connected to an end each of the upper and the lower sections steering shaft are provided with bevel gears on their ends, that, said gear mechanism further including the [[two]] bevel gears are connected to an additional bevel gear that is stationary mounted to the vehicle proximate said upper section and said lower section or supported in the steering column tube, with whereby the steering shafts rotating, in particular, with steering wheel and lower section rotate relative to each other in connection with said additional bevel gear identical rotational speeds, and wherein the steering shafts preferably rotate in opposite directions and the steering gear is realized accordingly, particularly in accordance with Figures 10a, b, c, and that the gear is realized in such a way that an additional bevel gear engages into the bevel gear of the lower steering shaft with a 180 degree offset, particularly in accordance with Figures 11a, b, c, and wherein the rotating directions of the upper and the lower steering shaft are preferably identical.~~

63. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 52, ~~Characterized by the fact that wherein the connecting gear mechanism is realized in such a way that cooperates with the transmission to change said rotational ratio between the upper and the lower steering shaft is adapted in a speed dependent and/or steering angle dependent fashion, particularly in accordance with Figures 14a, b, c.~~

64. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim ~~[[52]]~~ 60, ~~Characterized by the fact that the wherein a rotational ratio is changed due to a gear size of said connecting gear is realized with such a transmission between the sun gears [[and]] or said planet~~

gears that the desired deviation between the rotational speeds of the steering wheel and the steering shaft is achieved.

65. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 48, ~~Characterized by the fact that~~ further including a first [[the]] airbag support tube connected to the airbag, and a second airbag support tube connected to the vehicle, is realized in such a way that said first and second airbag tubes resiliently connected to each other in a telescoping manner it accommodates another telescope-like tube section supported in springs.

66. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 65, ~~Characterized by the fact that~~ further including horn contacts associated with the first and second airbag support telescopic tubes are realized in such a way that they serve for accommodating contacts of the horn mechanism in an insulated fashion, particularly in accordance with Figures 15a, b, e whereby a horn circuit is electrically formed when said first and second airbag support tubes are telescoped together.

67. (Currently amended) The airbag steering assembly according to Claim 48, ~~Characterized by the fact that~~ wherein the steering column shaft one of said upper or lower sections includes; particularly in accordance with Figures 18a, b, c, is realized in such a way that a "sun-gear" is sun gear arranged on [[its upper]] an end thereof.

68. (Currently amended) An airbag steering assembly ~~with a stationary airbag mechanism,~~ Characterized by the fact that for a vehicle having an airbag mounted with a steering wheel, comprising:

a steering shaft including an upper section and a lower section, the airbag and steering wheel connected to said upper section, whereby the airbag does not rotate when the steering wheel is rotated, and the steering wheel connected to the lower section, the lower section connected to means for changing a steering angle of the vehicle, whereby the lower section rotates when the steering wheel is rotated;

a gear set connecting said steering wheel and lower sections, the gear set including a first gear connected to said steering wheel, and a second gear connected to said lower section; and

a transmission disposed between said first gear and said second gear, operative to change a rotational ratio between said steering wheel and said second section, said rotational ratio varied based upon a speed of the vehicle, or a rotational angle of the steering wheel.

69. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim 68, ~~Characterized by the fact that the~~ wherein at least a portion of said upper section is affixed to said vehicle and is stationary with respect to said steering wheel ~~column tube is realized in such a way that a connecting gear between the steering wheel and the steering shaft is also supported therein, particularly in accordance with Figures 18a, b, e.~~

70. (Canceled)

71. (Currently amended) The ~~airbag steering~~ assembly according to Claim ~~[[70]]~~ 68, ~~Characterized by the fact that the special steering wheel is realized in such a way that wherein said gear set includes a sun gear is integrated into or mounted on connected to the lower rotating assembly~~ section.

72. (New) The steering assembly of claim 62, wherein said gear mechanism further includes a second additional bevel gear, said additional bevel gear and said second additional bevel gear rotatably connected one to the other, wherein said additional bevel gear is rotatably connected to said steering wheel, and said second additional bevel gear is rotatably connected to said second section, whereby said steering wheel and said second section rotate in the same direction.

73. (New) The steering assembly of claim 68, wherein said transmission includes at least one additional gear disposed between said first and second gears, operative to maintain a directional rotation between said steering wheel and said second section.

74. (New) The steering assembly of claim 69, further including a connecting gear connected to the steering wheel and the lower section, said connecting gear mounted to said affixed portion of said upper section.